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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the pace of economic and social change in the Pacific Rim region, discussing the role that universities should play in mediating such change. It addresses five major issues pertaining to the role of universities: (1) the individual university's role in human resource development; (2) the relationship between universities and the greater community in regard to human resource development; (3) the relationships among universities within a single nation in regard to human resource development; (4) international cooperation among universities to foster human resource development; and (5) appropriate safeguards related to university autonomy. To address these challenges, universities need to emphasize applied and interdisciplinary curricula, enhance program delivery systems, develop centers for applied research, link universities via telecommunications networks, sponsor community education centers, and assure the quality of their educational programs. (MDM)

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SEMINAR ON EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE PACIFIC BASIN CO-PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY OF GUADALAJARA

Isla Navidad, Colima
Barra de Navidad, Jalisco, Mexico

April 25, 1994

Donald R. Gerth
President, California State University, Sacramento

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Our task this morning is to address qualitative and quantitative challenges in the development of human resources in the Pacific Basin. I have ten minutes to share with you.

My first and perhaps most important comment is that the pace of change in the Pacific Basin is extraordinary. I am not at all sure that we in the academic world comprehend it. I am not sure I comprehend it.

I have lived in and worked in the Pacific Basin for almost forty-five years, from a first posting as Field Representative in Southeast Asia for World University Service in 1950. My early memories are of a region digging out from a war. And then came early stages of modern agricultural development, industry, and commerce. And two more wars. The pace of change began to pick up--in Japan, in Hong Kong and Singapore, in Korea, in Taiwan. Still the change was gradual. And the traditional western economic powers were dominant. Then came the 1970's and the emergence of Japan as a major power, the emergence of the four tigers, and now we are in the 1990's. Can anyone doubt that China is to be a major force in the world in the twenty-first century. To visit eastern China is to visit a nation under construction. And the nations of Southeast Asia are underway.

If anyone believes that the topic of higher education and human resource development in the Pacific Basin is bringing the traditionally wealthy nations to the weak, let him or her rethink the issue. Look at NAFTA and its implications.

We all have something to bring to the table: experience, wisdom, success in various ways of developing higher education, and understanding of our own cultures, failures, the need to learn, and without exception in any nation in the Pacific Basin, the need to understand how to relate education to human intellectual and cultural development and to economic

development. No one has the ultimate answer, yet. We need to understand that the playing field is more level than we may have thought. All of us share a common understanding. The investment that any society makes in its own people is the most important that a society makes.

The pace of change in the 1990's is so great that we need to rethink the ambitious project that IAUP set upon at an Executive Committee meeting in Tokyo in 1989 under Luis Garibay's leadership. We have had two and now three good meetings. We have seen new relationships develop across national boundary lines. We have brought together business and industry leaders with those from the world of higher education. There is a raised consciousness about higher education and human resource development. The economic and social restructuring of higher education over the world is well underway.

We now need to move to a next phase of this project. Universities share many common traditions, whatever the nation in which they may be. Clark Kerr has recently made the point that universities, pulled away from common traditions and convergence of missions by the forces of the nation state over the past century, are now once again seeking or being moved toward convergence of mission and functions. This is not because of philosophical or ideological considerations, but because of practical economic and social and political imperatives. Knowledge and education are power, and the well being of the people of a nation. The ability of scientists and scholars of all kinds and in all disciplines and applied fields to secure and use and transmit knowledge from a world wide fund of developing knowledge and understanding is valued by almost every set of national leaders. Thus, we see a new and very practical imperative for universities to communicate and work together across national boundary lines and to converge, to be more alike than dissimilar in their missions and functioning. John Mallea questioned us in his remarks earlier: how will we behave. I have long believed in the unity of the academic community. We have more to gain by unity, we in the universities and we, the peoples of the nations.

We need to address, among other things, five key questions.

1. What contributions can a university make toward human resource development? What programs must be in place? How can these programs best function?

2. What set of relationships between universities and the greater community must be in place to secure optimal human resource development activity in a university? With business and industry in the private sector? With government?

3. What relationships among universities in a nation or state would best support the role of universities in human resource development?

4. What relationships among universities across nation state boundary lines would best pertain to the role of universities in human resource development? How can these be generated and developed? By universities and associations of universities? By governments?

5. What safeguards need be in place? There is an historic tension between the university, as an autonomous entity, functioning for the most idealistic and non-material reasons with the development and transmission of pure knowledge and the application of that knowledge--the interface of the university and the greater community. No one should expect that tension to disappear, for it is both necessary and healthy for a university in the real world. Given that tension, how is the necessary freedom of the university maintained while addressing "human resource development."

From my standpoint, the most interesting of these questions is the first. What contributions can a university make toward human resource development? What programs must be in place? How can these programs best function? Let me suggest just a few obvious answers to this first set of questions.

A. The most practical thing that we can do in universities is in the area of curriculum--the core academic program of our institutions. We can develop applied curricula, we can particularly emphasize interdisciplinary work, for the knowledge that is needed in the twenty-first century to function in the real world is not compartmentalized in the traditional way that we have understood knowledge over past centuries.

B. We can develop new and pervasive ways to bring programs to the greater community. I have sometimes thought that most universities, even in the later years of the twentieth century, exist behind moats. We need to find new and practical ways to bring programs to the community. In California we have often spoken of the thousand mile campus, the whole state as the campus of the California State University. We need to find ways to transform that rhetoric into reality.

C. We can develop centers of applied research. All of us have had experience with such centers over the years. How can we share that experience? How can we link centers for applied research? I recall just a year ago one center at my university, in which I have a substantial personal interest, inviting counterparts from

comparable universities across the country to join for an informal discussion. Indeed, that informal discussion is going on in these very same days that we are gathered together here in Barra de Navidad as that group of people from universities across the United States gather once more to share their knowledge and working relationships with the greater community.

D. One of the most practical things that can be done is to link our universities through the miracle of telecommunications. It is now technically possible and financially practical to link universities, students, faculty, and individuals from the greater community, within and across nations. We are going to see a demonstration of that in 1995 when IAUP sponsors a first world-wide course taught by at least one faculty member from each continent to at least one group of students from each continent, a course on economic development. IAUP can make educational history by doing this. (I need your support and involvement to make this happen, and I am soliciting for presidents who would like to have their campuses involved). The practical possibilities of linking universities through telecommunications are now with us. We can push that linkage into the greater community and all can benefit from our work.

E. Several years ago at the first of these conferences on human resource development, Helena Benitez, of the Philippine Women's University, proposed that university based institutes and centers be developed in communities. She offered her own nation as a practical possibility. I believe that the time has come to pursue that worthy goal, and for a number of IAUP member institutions to develop community centers in their regions, centers linked with human and economic development.

F. It is possible that the most practical thing that universities can do is to assure. to guarantee, the quality of education for their graduates. I have on more than one occasion shared with my colleagues on the faculty in Sacramento the idea that the most practical education we can make available to our students is one where students who attain the baccalaureate degree are absolutely guaranteed to possess the marks of an educated person, to read and to write well,, to think critically, to be able to speak in two or three languages beyond their native tongue, to understand the technological and scientific world in which we live, to have an appreciation and understanding of the richness

of the traditions and culture and history of all parts of the world, and the like. I am convinced that university graduates who possess these marks of an educated person would be invaluable in their communities and would be employed continually for productive and full lifetimes. This may be the best form of human resource development.

We have much to do together. How can we join hands to cause human resource development to happen in a productive and collaborative way? Most certainly we can help each other. That is the purpose of this remarkable conference.